National probation inspection Standards

HM Inspectorate of Probation

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Contents

Introduction

The standards are not separated into domains one and two. Instead, there is one set of four standards, and case inspections will be used as evidence for those standards, alongside other sources of qualitative evidence from evidence in advance (EiA) and fieldwork. The four proposed standards are:

N.1. Leadership and governance

N.2. Staffing

N.3. Services

N.4. Infrastructure

The standards are designed to enable us to comment on the sufficiency of national arrangements to support, enable or drive the effective delivery of probation services by regions and PDUs. What we are interested in is the relationship between what happens at a national level and how this links to the effective delivery of probation services.

N.1. Leadership and governance

National leadership and governance arrangements drive the effective delivery of probation services.

N.1.1 Do national strategic arrangements support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Is there a national evidence-based vision and strategy for the probation service?

b) Is there a national delivery plan that supports the delivery of the vision and strategy?

c) Do national governance arrangements effectively support the delivery of the vision and strategy?

d) Are strong and well-maintained collaborative arrangements in place with HMPPS and cross-government partners?

N.1.2 Does national leadership activity support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Does the national operating model enable regions to take a deliberate, strategic, and informed approach to meeting diverse needs?

b) Do national leaders ensure the effective implementation of policies?

c) Does national leadership activity support and enhance regional and PDU leadership?

d) When implementing national changes, is the impact on service delivery, including equality impact, assessed, and appropriate action taken?

N.1.3 Does the national culture support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Is there effective national communication to regions and PDUs that supports the effective delivery of probation services?

b) Are regions and PDUs enabled to be responsive to feedback from staff and people on probation?

c) Does the culture of the probation service promote openness, constructive challenge, and ideas?

d) Is there a sufficient focus at the national level on staff wellbeing?

N.1.4 Do national leaders use analysis, evidence, and learning to support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Are comprehensive national assurance arrangements in place that support the effective delivery of probation services?

b) Is there a sufficient national understanding of performance and quality across the probation service and at all levels?

c) Do national leaders learn systematically?

d) Do national leaders understand and use equity, diversity and inclusion

e) information to drive improvement?

f) Do national leaders seek, analyse and use the views of people on probation at a national level to review and improve services?

g) Are probation services improved through evaluation and development of the underlying evidence base?

N.2. Staffing

National arrangements for staffing enable the effective delivery of probation services.

N.B. Staffing refers to all staff including administration roles, practitioners and managers.

N.2.1 Do national workload management arrangements support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Do national resourcing arrangements ensure manageable workloads for regional and PDU staff?

b) Do national resource management tools support regions and PDUs to effectively manage staff workloads?

c) Are regions and PDUs given appropriate authority and support to manage workloads in response to local pressures?

N.2.2 Do national recruitment and retention arrangements support regions and PDUs to deliver effective probation services?

a) Do national recruitment and retention arrangements ensure the provision of sufficient numbers of staff to regions and PDUs?

b) Do national recruitment and retention arrangements ensure the provision of staff with the right skills to regions and PDUs?

c) Do national recruitment and retention arrangements support the achievement of a diverse workforce?

d) Are national recruitment arrangements efficient?

N.2.3 Do national learning and development arrangements support regions and PDUs to effectively deliver probation services?

    a) Is a culture of learning and continuous improvement promoted actively at a national level?

    b) Do policies, strategies and arrangements for learning and development support the effective delivery of probation services?

    c) Do national learning and development arrangements ensure that staff are sufficiently skilled, competent, and experienced?

    d) Is the impact of learning and development evaluated and changes made in response?

N.3. Services

National arrangements drive the effective delivery of a comprehensive range of probation services.

N.3.1 Is there a complete and up-to-date national analysis of the profile of people on probation that enables the effective delivery of a comprehensive range of probation services?

    a) Does the analysis capture sufficiently the desistance and offending-related factors presented by people on probation?

    b) Does the analysis capture sufficiently the risk of harm profile of people on probation?

    c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to equity, diversity and inclusion factors and to issues of disproportionality?

    d) Is there sufficient analysis of local patterns of offending and sentencing?

    e) Does the analysis inform national delivery planning and resourcing?

N.3.2 Do national arrangements ensure the provision of a sufficient range and volume of probation services?

    a) Are the right partnerships in place and operating effectively at a national level to effectively deliver probation services?

    b) Are national arrangements for the provision of services well understood by regions and PDUs?

    c) Do national arrangements for the provision of services meet the needs of regions and PDUs?

    d) Is appropriate authority delegated to regions and PDUs in relation to contracting with partner agencies and managing their performance?

    e) Do national arrangements promote effective collaborative working between service providers and probation practitioners?

    f) Is building strengths and enhancing protective factors central to the national commissioning and delivery of services?

    g) Is public protection central to the national commissioning and delivery of services?

    h) Are equity, diversity and inclusion factors and issues of disproportionality addressed sufficiently in the way that services are nationally commissioned and delivered?

i) Are national arrangements for the provision of services informed by regular robust evidence-based monitoring, evaluation, and review?

N.4. Infrastructure

Infrastructure supports the effective delivery of probation services.

N.4.1 Do facilities support the effective delivery of probation services?

a) Do national arrangements ensure that premises and offices support the delivery of appropriate personalised work and effective engagement?

b) Do national arrangements provide safe environments for the effective delivery of services?

c) Do national arrangements provide accessible environments for the effective delivery of services?

N.4.2 Do ICT systems enable regions and PDUs to effectively deliver probation services?

d) Do ICT systems enable staff to plan, deliver and record their work in a timely way?

e) Do ICT systems enable staff to appropriately and reliably access information?

f) Do ICT systems enable effective information exchange with partners?

g) Do ICT systems support remote working where required?

h) Do ICT systems support the production of the necessary management information?

i) Are regions and PDUs supported to find local ICT solutions where these may be needed?